

REMARKS

Claims 13, 14, 17, 19-25, and 29-35 are pending in this application. Of these, claims 22 and 24 are independent.¹ Favorable reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the Examiner accepted Applicant's replacement Terminal Disclaimer and objected to claims 22-24 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Applicant has rewritten claims 22 and 24 in independent form, with each claim including all of the limitations of previously pending independent claim 11. Applicant now respectfully submits that claims 22 and 24, along with claim 23, which depends from claim 22, are allowable. Applicant therefore respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections.

The Examiner also rejected claims 11, 13, 14, 17-21, 25, and 28 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cruysberghs, U.S. Patent No. 5,368,207 ("Cruysberghs"), i.e., the embodiment of Figures 8-9 in view of the embodiment of Figure 3, further in view of Alfons, U.S. Patent No. 5,285,931 ("Alfons"). Applicant does not concede that the previously pending versions of these claims were unpatentable over Cruysberghs, alone or in combination with Alfons. Nonetheless, in order to advance prosecution and obtain early issuance, Applicant cancelled claims 11, 18, and 28 without prejudice or disclaimer², and amended the claims such that claims 13, 14, 17, 19-21, and 25 now all ultimately depend from independent claim 22. As such, claims 13, 14, 17, 19-21, and 25 are believed to be allowable. Applicant therefore respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of these claims.

Applicant has added new claims 29-35. These claims are identical to claims 13, 14, 17, 19-21, and 25, respectively, except that new claims 29-35 ultimately depend from independent claim 24 rather than independent claim 22. As such, claims 29-35 are believed to be allowable.

¹ The Examiner is urged to independently confirm this recitation of the pending claims.

² Applicant reserves the right to file these claims (and any claims previously depending from these claims) in a continuation application.

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Serial No. : 10/657,250
Filed : September 9, 2003
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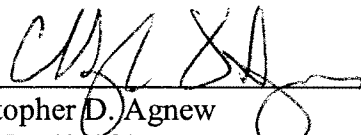
It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Applicant believes the application is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

Please apply any charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-0150, referencing attorney docket no. 17042-0004001.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 8/12/08



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